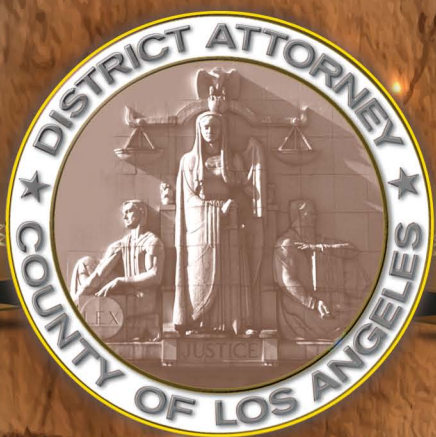


# *Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office*



## *Courageous Citizen Awards Ceremony*

Wednesday, November 12, 2014  
Sponsored by the Rotary Club of Westchester

### *Award Recipients*

**Javiera Guarda and Suga Brown-Faal**  
Presented by Deputy District Attorney Kenneth Chiu

On Dec. 19, 2013, Javiera Guarda was walking with a neighbor in South Los Angeles when they saw a man grab his 4-month-old Pit Bull puppy, lift it over his head and slam it to the ground. Alarmed, the women yelled at the man to stop and called police. Two weeks later, Guarda saw the defendant abusing the dog again by dragging it on its belly on the sidewalk. Guarda followed him in her car, got out, yelled at him to let the puppy go and called police. Suga Brown-Faal, also a witness to the animal abuse, took multiple photos and cell phone video of the assault and turned it over to authorities when they arrived and arrested the dog owner. Ultimately, through eyewitness accounts and video evidence, these two women helped identify the perpetrator and assisted in the prosecution of this violent offender.

**Michael Miller and Joseph Evans**  
Presented by Deputy District Attorney Simone Shay

A 17-year-old girl was driving to school on June 12, 2012 when she stopped at a light and a stranger suddenly jumped into her car. The man forced the teenager into the back seat and drove around Malibu for several hours. The assailant sexually assaulted the girl. Eventually, he stopped at a gas station where the victim caught the attention of Michael Miller, who noticed she was moving her mouth as if to say, "Help me." Miller confronted the man and put himself in front of the car but the defendant backed out and drove off. Joseph Evans also saw what was happening and followed the suspect's car but the defendant quickly lost him. As Evans drove through a pass, he spotted the car in a turnout. Both Miller and Evans called 911 and notified authorities of the defendant's whereabouts, which led to the kidnapper's capture and the girl's rescue. The valiant actions and quick thinking of these two men averted what could have been a tragic outcome.

**Samuel Gibson**  
Presented by Deputy District Attorney Miji Vellakkattel

On March 12, 2009, a teenage girl was walking to her friend's house in the Florence area when she noticed her ex-boyfriend following her. The jealous ex-boyfriend had previously beaten her up and threatened to kill her. As he began to chase after her, she attempted to get away but was caught as she tried to jump over a fence. The former boyfriend punched her several times, pulled out a knife and then began cutting her face. He stabbed her six times saying, "If I can't have you, no one will!" Hearing cries for help, Samuel Gibson located the bloodied victim trying to break away from the defendant. Gibson confronted the ex-boyfriend, who told him to leave or he was going to get cut too. Gibson didn't back down and said he didn't fear what would happen to him. He then grabbed the victim and took her into an apartment until police arrived. Gibson testified at the preliminary hearing that he was unafraid of the defendant because he knew it was not his time to die.